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PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE
Attorney Docket No. 7000-64135

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Date 2/13/03 By W.B. Ritchie

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of Raimar Boehlke et al.)

Serial No. 09/847,676)

Filed: 05/02/2001)

For: ARRANGEMENT FOR ELIMINATING)
OR AT LEAST FOR REDUCING THE)
SIZE OF INTERSPACES BETWEEN)
THREE ELEMENTS ARRANGED ONE)
BEHIND THE OTHER IN THE)
LONGITUDINAL DIRECTION)

Art Unit: 3751

Examiner: Azadeh Kokabi

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TECHNOLOGY CENTER R3700

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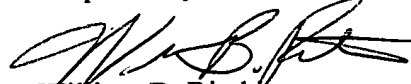
TRANSMITTAL LETTER

In response to instructions received by the applicant and as discussed with Examiner Kokabi, enclosed for filing please find:

Additional Amendment to Claims
Clean copy of Claims
Return post card

It the Examiner feels, for any reason, that a personal interview will expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to phone applicant's attorney.

Respectfully submitted,




William B. Ritchie

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02-14-03

3751

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ADDITIONAL AMENDMENT TO CLAIMS

In response to instructions received by the applicant and as discussed with Examiner Kokabi, applicant hereby amends claims 5 and 6 as follows:

--5: An apparatus for guiding sutures through a membrane wall near the edge region of an opening comprising:

a suture-feed part, a suture-clamping part, and a suture-accommodating part, said suture-feed part, suture-clamping part, and suture-accommodating part being arranged one behind the other along a common longitudinal axis at a distal arrangement end, said suture-feed part, suture-clamping part, and suture-

accommodating part being rotatable relative to one another about said common longitudinal axis;

said [suture-feed part] suture-accommodating part, provided at said distal arrangement end and being connected by an inner sleeve to a first rotary adjustment part provided at a proximal arrangement end;

said suture-clamping part being connected to an outer sleeve, said outer sleeve [being enclosed by] is enclosing said inner sleeve, and wherein said outer sleeve being connected to a second rotary adjustment part, said second rotary adjustment part being at a predetermined distance from said first rotary adjustment part and from said distal arrangement end;

said [suture-accommodating part] suture-feed part being in adjacent relation to said suture-clamping part, said [suture-accommodating part] suture-feed part being connected to a third rotary adjustment part, said third rotary adjustment part being adjacently connected to said second rotary adjustment part; and

two spring devices, one of said spring devices located between said first rotary adjustment part and said second rotary adjustment part, the other of said spring devices located between said second rotary adjustment part and said third rotary adjustment part, whereby said spring devices force said rotary adjustment parts away from one another.--

—6. An apparatus for guiding sutures through a membrane wall near the edge region of an opening comprising:

a suture-feed part, a suture-clamping part, and a suture-accommodating part, said suture-feed part, suture-clamping part, and suture-accommodating part being arranged behind the other along a common longitudinal axis at a distal arrangement end, said suture-feed part, suture-clamping part, and suture-accommodating part being rotatable relative to one another about said common longitudinal axis;

said [suture-feed part] suture-accommodating part, provided at said distal arrangement end being connect by an inner sleeve to a first rotary adjustment part provided at a proximal arrangement end;

said suture-clamping part being connected to an outer sleeve, said outer sleeve [being enclosed by] is enclosing said inner sleeve, and wherein said outer sleeve being connected to a second rotary adjustment part, said rotary adjustment part being at a predetermined distance from said first rotary adjustment part and from said distal arrangement end;

said [suture-accommodating part] suture-feed part being in adjacent relation to said suture-clamping part, said [suture-accommodating part] suture-feed part being connected to a third rotary adjustment part, said third rotary adjustment part being adjacently connected to said second rotary adjustment part, said second and said third rotary adjustment parts being coupled to one another in the direction of said common longitudinal axis;

said outer sleeve, having a proximal end and an edge between said first and second rotary adjustment parts, said outer sleeve, being connected to said second rotary adjustment part, is displaced relative to said second rotary

adjustment part in the direction of said common longitudinal axis and at said proximal end; and

two spring devices, located between said edge and respectively adjacent sides of said first and second rotary adjustment parts, whereby said spring devices force said rotary adjustment parts away from one another.--

The changes are minimal and relate to an inadvertent transposition of the suture-accommodating part and suture-feed part. Antecedent basis for the correction is found in paragraphs 39 and 45 of the specification. A clean copy of the claims is attached hereto.

This amendment of the claims places the application in condition for allowance. Allowance is hereby respectfully requested. If the Examiner feels, for any reason, that a personal interview will expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to phone applicant's attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 2-13-03



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